

REMARKS

Status of the claims

Claims 1-15 and 17-23 are pending, with Claim 1, 9 and 15 being independent. Claims 1 and 15 have been amended for reasons unrelated to patentability to improve their form.

Requested action

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding objection and rejection in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Formal Claim Objection

The Examiner objects to Claims 1-15 and 17-23 because the terminology used therein is not consistent with the terminology used in the specification.

In response, Applicants contacted the Examiner by telephone to clarify the objection. The Examiner stated that this objection could be overcome by pointing to the portions of the application disclosing the relationship between the claimed one-end bearing member cylinder and the one-end bearing member. As a result, Applicants submit that Figure 24 and page 56, lines 23-25 of the specification disclose a relationship between the bearing member 340B and the cylinder 340aa that supports the claimed relationship between the one-end bearing member and the one-end bearing member cylinder. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

Substantive Rejection

Claims 1-15 and 17-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as being anticipated by the patent to Yokomori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,002,898).¹

Response to substantive rejection

This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites, in part, a one-end bearing member cylinder, which is provided on the one-end bearing member and which has an outer surface engaged with an inner surface of a one-end frame groove, and a one-end side cover projection provided inside a one-end side cover and engaged with an inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder.

In contrast, the patent to Yokomori et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest these features.

In addition, the Office Action is not understood to identify the elements of this patent corresponding to the claimed inner and outer surfaces of the one-end bearing member cylinder, the claimed inner surface of the one-end frame groove that engages the outer surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder, or the claimed one-end side cover projection engaged with the inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder.

Further, the Office Action is not understood to identify any passages of the Yokomori et al. patent that disclose a one-end bearing member cylinder, which is provided on the one-end bearing member and which has an outer surface engaged with an inner surface of a one-end

^{1/}Applicants note that the Office Action identifies the inventors of this patent as Yokomoro et al., which appears to be a typographical error. As a result, Applicants refer to this patent as the Yokomori et al. patent.

frame groove, and a one-end side cover projection provided inside a one-end side cover and engaged with an inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder, as recited by amended Claim 1.

Instead, the Office Action states: “Once again, Yokomoro et al. teaches a toner cover 64 having side portions (Figure 8), one-end bearing member 63F (Figure 34), and an end side seal 63A (Figure 33). Yokomoro teaches end members which are engaged together.” But Applicants note that element 64 is identified in the Yokomori et al. patent as a shutter, element 63F is identified in the Yokomori et al. patent as a coupling frame, and element 63A is identified in the Yokomori et al. patent as a developing frame. Moreover, neither these elements, nor other elements disclosed in the patent are understood to correspond to a one-end bearing member cylinder, which is provided on the one-end bearing member and which has an outer surface engaged with an inner surface of a one-end frame groove, and a one-end side cover projection provided inside a one-end side cover and engaged with an inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder, as recited by amended Claim 1. This can be seen in the following discussion that makes reference to the attached annotated sketch A, which shows aspects of the present invention and is derived from Figure 29, and the attached annotated sketch of Figures 8, 33, 34, 41, and 45 of the Yokomori et al. patent.

In the Yokomori et al. patent, the inner side of the coupling frame 63F (Figure 45) and the developing frame 63A (Figure 33) are understood to be connected to each other by engagement between the cylindrical dowels 63Fg (Figure 45) and the positioning holes 63An, and 63Ap (Figure 33) and threading the hole 63Fa (Figure 45) and the female screw 63Am (Figure 33) by the screw (col. 28, lines 34-39 and lines 44-49 and Figure 34).

Also in the Yokomori et al. patent, the outer side of the coupling frame (Figure 34) and the inner side of the side cover 63D (Figure 41) are connected with each other by engagement between the hole 63Fr (Figure 34) and the spring holding projection 63Ds (Figure 41) and threading the holes 63Drs (Figure 41) and the screw 63Fe (Figure 34) by screws 43 (col. 28, lines 19-25 and column 39, lines 18-25).

Also in the Yokomori et al. patent, the round hole 64a is engaged with the cylindrical portion 63c2, as shown in Figures 7 and 8.

Therefore, even assuming arguendo that the shutter 64 corresponds to the claimed one-end side cover, the side portions thereof would have nothing to do with the cylindrical dowels 63Fg, the hole 63Fa, the positioning holes 63An, 63Ap or the female screw. In addition, assuming arguendo that the cartridge frame 63 corresponds to the claimed one-end side cover, the Office Action is not understood to have established that the Yokomori et al. patent discloses or suggests a one-end bearing member cylinder, which is provided on the one-end bearing member and which has an outer surface engaged with an inner surface of a one-end frame groove, and a one-end side cover projection provided inside a one-end side cover and engaged with an inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder, as recited by amended Claim 1.

Since the patent to Yokomori et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest at least two features of amended Claim 1, the Office is not understood to have satisfied its burden of proof to establish anticipation of amended independent Claim 1 over the patent to Yokomori et al. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of amended Claim 1 be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 9 recites, in part, a one-end bearing member cylinder engagement step of engaging a one-end bearing member cylinder provided on the one-end bearing member with a

one-end frame groove provided at one longitudinal end of the cartridge frame to mount the one-end bearing member on the cartridge frame, and a one-end side cover projection engaging step of engaging a one-end side cover projection provided on the one-end side cover with an inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder engaged with the one-end frame groove. But the patent to Yokomori et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest this one-end bearing member cylinder engagement step and this one-end side cover projection engaging step. Nor is the Office Action understood to have established which passages in the patent to Yokomori et al. disclose or suggest these steps. Therefore, the Office is not understood to have satisfied its burden of proof to establish anticipation of independent Claim 9 over the patent to Yokomori et al. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claim 9 be withdrawn.

Amended independent Claim 15 relates to an electrophotographic image forming apparatus comprising a mounting portion configured and positioned to detachably mount a developing cartridge including a one-end bearing member cylinder, which is provided on the one-end bearing member and which has an outer surface engaged with an inner surface of the one-end frame groove, and a one-end side cover projection provided on an inside of a one-end side cover and engaged with an inner surface of the one-end bearing member cylinder, which is engaged with the inner surface of the one-end frame groove. But the patent to Yokomori et al. is not understood to disclose or suggest these relationships between the one-end bearing member cylinder and the one-end frame groove and between the one-end side cover projection and the one-end bearing member cylinder. In addition, the Office Action is not understood to have established which passages in the patent to Yokomori et al. disclose or suggest these features. Therefore, the Office is not understood to have satisfied its burden of proof to establish

anticipation of amended independent Claim 15 over the patent to Yokomori et al. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claim 15 be withdrawn.

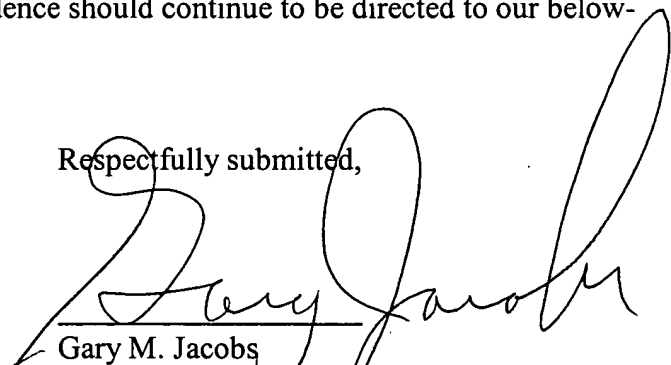
The dependent claims are allowable for the reasons given for the independent claims and because they recite features that are patentable in their own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the claims are now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



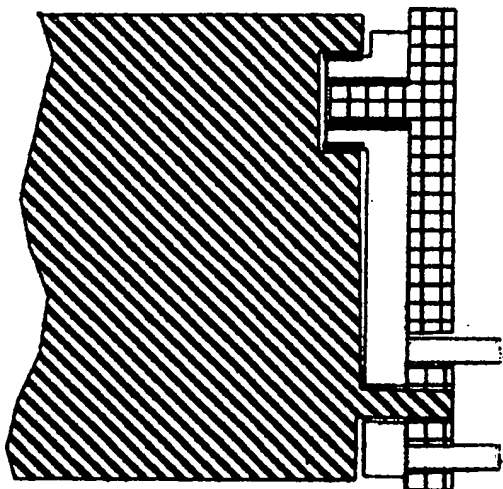
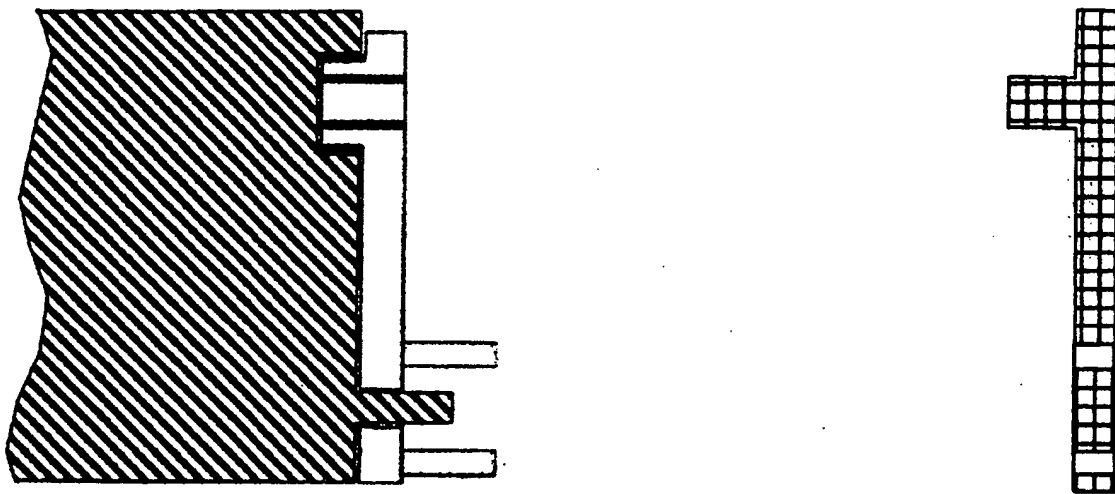
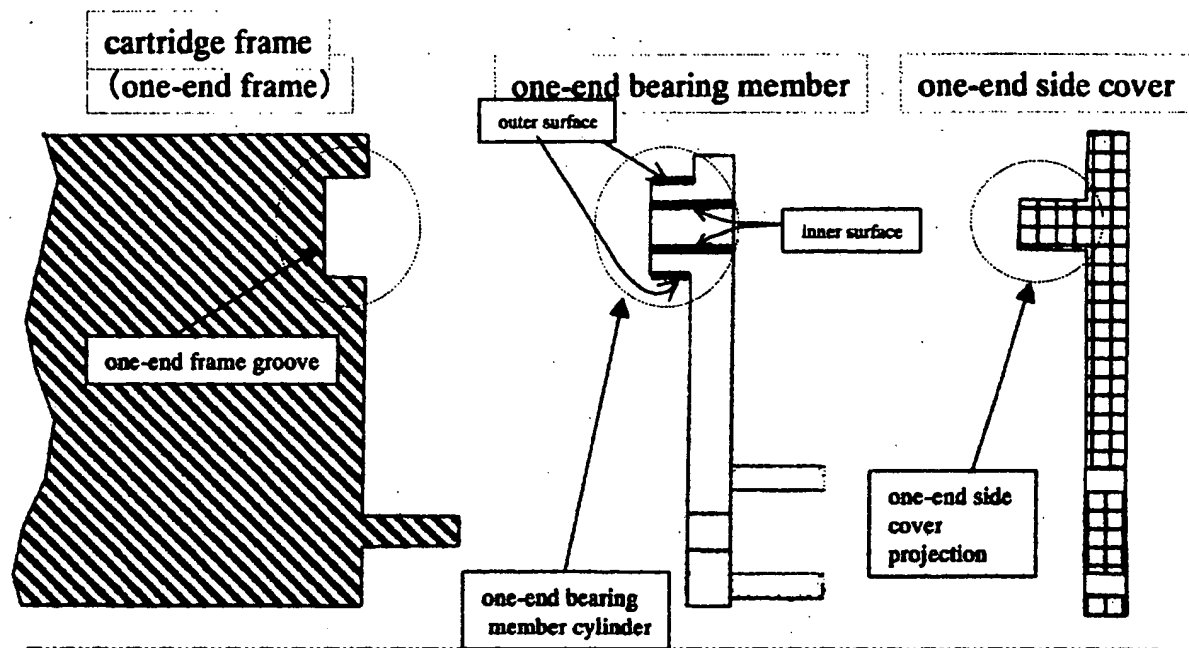
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SKETCH "A"

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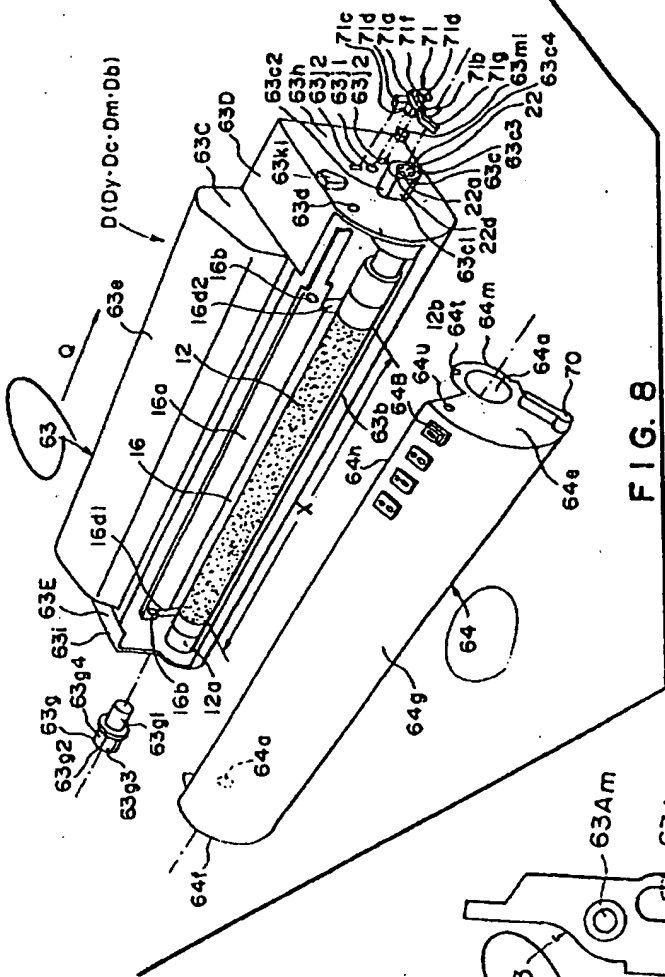


FIG. 8

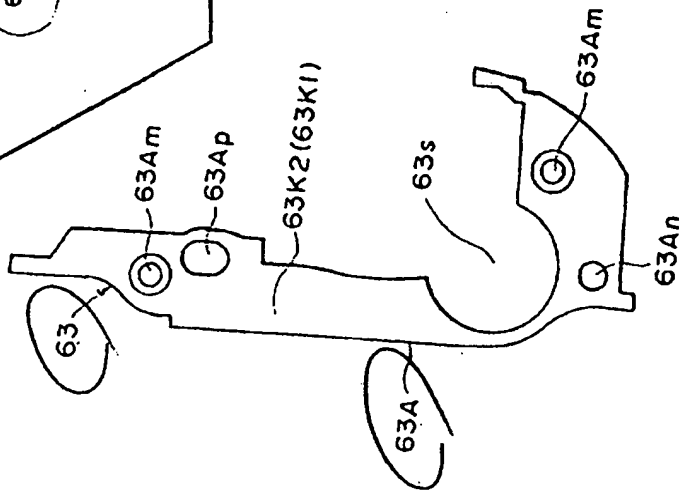


FIG. 33

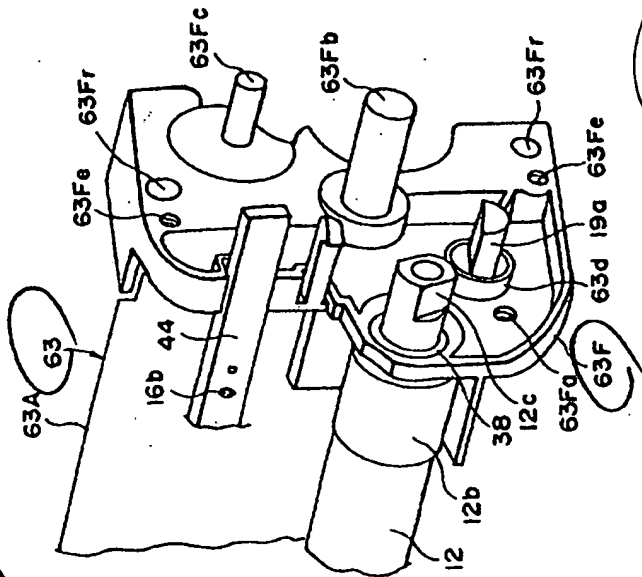


FIG. 34

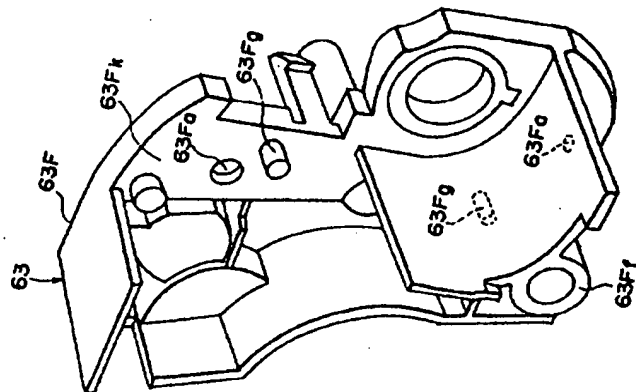


FIG. 45

